

Statutory routes to workplace flexibility in cross-national perspective ^[1]

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AVAILABILITY

- Full report in pdf ^[2]

- Press release ^[3]

Excerpts from press release:

The report, *Statutory Routes to Workplace Flexibility in Cross-National Perspective*, is based on a review of statutory employment rights in 21 high-income countries, with a focus on the United States, aimed at increasing workers' ability to change their working hours and arrangements to balance work and family, and facilitate lifelong learning and gradual retirement.

The 21 countries surveyed were Australia, Austria, Belgium, Canada, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Ireland, Italy, Luxembourg, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Portugal, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, United Kingdom, and the United States.

Although there has been progress in workplace practices, high-quality flexible work arrangements are still the exception in the U.S. When lack of flexibility and lack of affordable child care and elder care combine, many women stop paid work altogether, or trade down to a job with more feasible work hours, at the cost of having to work below their professional potential.

How other countries are encouraging workplace flexibility:

- Changed working hours and/or scheduling for any employee. (In Belgium, all employees over the course of their working life can take a career break of up to one year full-time, and may stretch this out to a maximum of 5 years, working 80 percent of usual hours, to look after children or family; return to education; volunteer in the community or whatever else they would like to do.)
- Gradual return to work after childbirth. (In Norway, parents, for the first two years after the birth or adoption of a child, can return to work for 50, 60, 75, 80 or 90 percent of their usual working hours.)
- Breast feeding breaks. (In Portugal, mothers or fathers, for the first year after the birth of a child, are entitled to breastfeeding breaks twice a day &em; or can reduce the overall length of the working day.)
- Alternative work arrangements for parents of younger children or children with disabilities. (In Spain, parents caring for children under eight years old are entitled to reduce their working hours between 20 and 50 percent.)
- The right to refuse overtime or shift patterns that clash with care responsibilities. (In Switzerland, for employees caring for children or relatives in need of care.)
- The right to request flextime, part-time work, rescheduling or home based work for employees caring for children or relatives in need of care. (UK and New Zealand.)
- Alternative schedules or reduced hours to go back to education. (In Denmark, for employees who left school without a high school diploma, for up to three &em;and-a &em;half years.)

The report concludes that enhanced rights to flexible work can improve work/life quality, support economic growth and prosperity, and contribute to greater gender equality.

Region: Australia and New Zealand ^[4]

Canada ^[5]

Europe ^[6]

United States ^[7]

Tags: accessibility ^[8]

[1] <https://childcarecanada.org/documents/research-policy-practice/08/05/statutory-routes-workplace-flexibility-cross-national> [2] <https://iwpr.org/pdf/B258workplaceflex.pdf> [3] <https://iwpr.org/pdf/B258release.pdf> [4] <https://childcarecanada.org/category/region/australia-and-new-zealand> [5] <https://childcarecanada.org/taxonomy/term/7864> [6] <https://childcarecanada.org/category/region/europe> [7] <https://childcarecanada.org/taxonomy/term/7865> [8] <https://childcarecanada.org/category/tags/accessibility>